Battle of the Scrolls

—Joseph A. Fitzmyer

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Commonweal

The Case of Ezra Pound

by Sam Hynes

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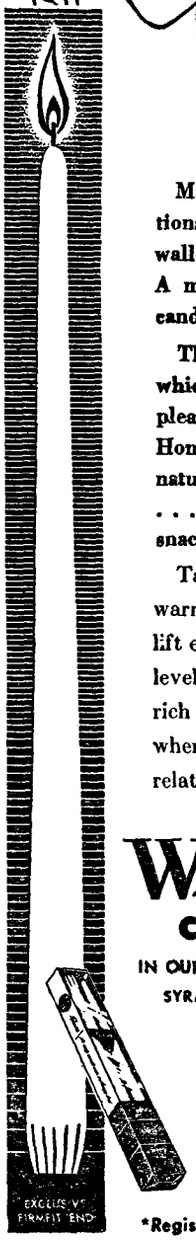

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The Commonweal

week by week

RELIGION AND EDUCATION

THE recent statement by the members of the American hierarchy on the role of private and church-related schools in America should be welcomed with interest by every citizen of the United States, regardless of his personal religious commitment.

This document puts forth, clearly and objectively, certain vital premises governing the function of education in a democracy—premises which need regular and forceful restatement because they are so frequently minimized or forgotten. Believer and atheist alike, for example, should recognize and assent to the truth of the Bishops' declaration that in education the state "has no authority either to monopolize the field or to arrogate to itself exclusive privileges and powers. The state, by definition, is not primarily an educative agency."

The attempt of Oregon to outlaw religious schools in the Twenties and the attitudes of Paul Blanshard and former president James Conant of Harvard in the Fifties serve notice that the temptation to make public school education not merely the central, but the only educational agency, is persistently strong whenever democracy is confused with monochromatic uniformity. The Bishops' statement is a vigorous clarification of an often confused educational fact.

This recurring temptation to make the state the unique authority in education rises usually not from religious prejudice, but from the suspicion of sincere men that religious education is dangerously divisive. Religious schools are definitely different from the prevailing pattern of American education, but to see divisiveness where there is only difference is to overlook the essentially pluralistic structure of American democracy. Religion is a subject on which we Americans have agreed to disagree. We have also agreed that the state has neither the right nor the competence to pass judgment on sacral affairs; we will not permit Caesar to pose as theologian.

America's religious pluralism and its separation of God and Caesar has, in the verdict of history, contributed immeasurably to the welfare of the entire nation. The vigorous diversity of our religious views has prevented the establishment of any one religious view as *the* religious view, and has thereby kept Caesar out of the pulpit.

If, therefore, groups of American parents feel that although they contribute to the support of public schools, such schools cannot satisfy even the minimal sacral requirements of their children, they have every right to maintain schools wherein these requirements will be met. In so doing they are contributing to, not detracting from, our democratic pluralism: they are making sure that in America there will continue to be citizens of deep religious commitment, skilled at distinguishing the things of God from the things of Caesar, and determined that no one sacral view, including that of Secularism, shall, through default, ever become the official view of America.

SO strong, indeed, has become the fear of Secularism emerging as the real sacrality of our "sacrally neutral" public schools that both parents and educators in some areas of the country are searching for means to develop religious awareness in the students without changing the religious non-commitment of the schools.

We agree with those educators and parents who insist that it is tragically inconsistent to affirm, as the Supreme Court has recently done, that "we are a religious people" and yet submit religion to the conspiracy of silence in our public school classrooms. We support many of the practical steps that have been taken to combat religious illiteracy in the schools, such as released-time programs, and teaching, not religion, but about religion as an historical and social fact necessary to understand the past and present of both the United States and Western civilization.

We are inclined to question, however, some of the "remedial religion" measures that have recently been suggested, particularly those which

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advocate that the public school should positively teach moral and spiritual values, in an atmosphere friendly to religious belief. Not only the atheist or agnostic, but the member of any religion which guards dogma might well object that in such a program the public school was unjustly interfering with the sacral attitudes fostered in the student's home. If, for example, a school board suggests that science courses offer an excellent chance to show the existence of God from the design discernible in the universe, can the Catholic parent be sure that the God discussed in the high school biology course is neither the Watchmaker God of the deists nor the Over-Soul of the pantheists? Can the Catholic parent be sure a civics teacher in our religiously pluralistic society can effectively show why God is the source of man's inalienable rights when the nature of God and the nature of man are subjects of such endless debate among the American people?

We recognize the concern and sincerity of educators who propose such measures to keep the public schools from turning into religious vacuums, but the religious parent of dogmatic commitments may well doubt that such a "religion of the least common denominator" will really fill the vacuum.

LESS LIGHT

THE dangers of curtailing or withdrawing America's foreign aid are unhappily all too amply illustrated by the electric-power plight of South Korea. The country where the historic UN stand was made against further outright Communist aggression now finds itself in the grip of a severe shortage. Accordingly domestic users have the electricity turned off except for five hours a day, right after sunset. Basic industries may use electricity eighteen hours a day; others are much more sharply curtailed. Enforcement is already strict and any future offenders will be denied electricity until the end of 1956.

How did this come about? A transformer broke down, which presumably can in time be repaired or replaced. But another blow was the recent withdrawal of two American power-generating ships. Why did the withdrawal take place just at this moment? The South Koreans believe that they will complete facilities for handling their own power needs by next March. Yet in the wintry meantime Korean industry will be crippled and home life made extremely grim.

Naturally the North Koreans are making the most of the South's plight and offering to discuss supplying hydro-electric power for peaceful use. This is a familiar pattern which has been repeated round the globe in recent weeks.

INTERRACIAL MARRIAGES

MORE than half the states in the United States ban marriages between persons of different races—a dubious distinction shared only, as far as we know, by the Union of South Africa, where *apartheid* is the law of the land. Now the Supreme Court, which has been making so much history lately that it is hard to keep up with it, may be going to make some more, this time on state bans on such marriages.

The case which recently reached the Supreme Court involved a Chinese man and a Caucasian woman who married in North Carolina and then immediately returned to Virginia; fifteen months later, a Virginia court declared the marriage annulled, on the grounds that such a marriage was in violation of Virginia law. This decision was then appealed to the Supreme Court by the husband on the grounds that such laws violate the equal protection and due process of law clauses of the 14th Amendment. So far, the Supreme Court has not made a final ruling on the validity of the Virginia law, but it has asked the lower court to present a fuller statement of the facts in the case and, pending the study of these facts, has vacated the decision of the Virginia courts.

Oddly enough, the Supreme Court has never before ruled on the constitutionality of state bans on interracial marriage. In 1948, a historic California case led to the outlawing of that state's ban on interracial marriage, but the action was taken by the California Supreme Court, and the advocates of the law never carried it to the United States Supreme Court. Both parties in the Cali-

NEXT WEEK

BISHOP JOHN J. WRIGHT discusses Catholic attitudes toward intellectualism.

"There have been grave reasons in recent years to fear that in our newspapers and our forums, not to say even on our campuses, we have frequently revealed a nervous spirit of impatient and sullen anti-intellectualism. Such a spirit is surely inconsistent with the enlightened insistence of our forefathers concerning what must be the attitudes and accomplishments of Catholics in the realm of intellectual life. . . . How can we foster anew a truly Catholic reverence for the gifts of the intellect and a wholesome vigilance for their proper use and growth?"

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fornia case were Catholics, and they were strongly backed in their court fight by the Catholic Interracial Council of Los Angeles. The final decision was, it seems to us, beyond argument. The law in question infringed upon the free exercise of their religion by the two parties involved. And though the state may legitimately claim the right to legislate on the purely civil effects of marriage, this does not give it the right to ban marriage entirely except for an important social objective and by reasonable means. Certainly, legislation on marriage must be based on more than racial prejudice and unfounded, unscientific superstitions.

For all these reasons, we hope that the Supreme Court will declare unconstitutional the Virginia law banning interracial marriage and that this will be followed by the early demise of all similar laws in other states. The number of interracial marriages that would take place if these laws were not on the books is, we suppose, insignificant. But that is not the point. What is amazing is that twenty-eight states in this country can have such laws in force without more public protest about the encroachment of the state into an area where it has no business.

EXODUS TO THE SUBURBS

THERE has long been a certain mystery why the forebodings that mass unemployment would result from mustering millions of men out of the American armed forces, and dismantling war plants, never materialized. It is interesting to ponder what actually happened during the past decade. First, the nation's productive capacity was called upon for extra effort in order to supply foodstuffs, goods and tools, primarily to war-devastated Europe. We were, of course, spurred on by Soviet intransigence.

By the time foreign demand began to slacken, domestic purchasing had begun an upsurge which has continued almost without pause to this day. Prominent in this development were war- and immediate-postwar marriages. The founding of millions of new families and a marked rise in the national birth rate led to a greatly increased need for housing, goods and services—which likewise has continued to mount steadily. Meanwhile wages in many industries have risen materially in the postwar years, to increase purchasing-power the nation over.

All this has conspired to forward another development which may well not have reached its peak: a big exodus to the suburbs. This has now reached such proportions that it has created its own demand for dwellings, schools, roads, hospitals and all sorts of municipal facilities—the sort of thing that we meant by the term "public works" in our agonized striving to get the national economy rolling back in the nineteen thirties. When to all these are added the commercial facilities needed to service our tremendously expanded suburbs, the impact on the economy can be appreciated.

The extent of this recent growth is startling. Some ten million inhabitants have been added to the suburban population of America's 168 largest metropolitan areas in but the past five years—an increase of 27.8%. This suburban sector has now shot past the nation's whole rural population and is approaching the total for the country's major cities. *U.S. News and World Report* finds that planners in a dozen of our largest cities expect their suburbs to grow four times as fast as these cities themselves in the *next* five years.

One of the biggest of the many problems (in both city and environs) resulting from this wholesale flight to the suburbs is that departing families tend to be replaced by income groups considerably less able to support local merchants or pay city taxes. Added financial strain therefore confronts large cities at a moment when the need for supplanting their rapidly deteriorating slums by decent low-cost housing has become increasingly urgent. This would clearly seem to indicate that the required job will not be done without materially increased state and federal housing aid.

REPUBLICAN PROSPECTS

SO far, the Eisenhower Republicans around the President have kept dissension inside the Party to a minimum by postponing the date of the President's great decision. But if Mr. Eisenhower decides not to run again, the GOP convention in 1956 promises to be a real brawl. Senator Knowland will not yield easily to anyone, especially if his name happens to be Nixon; Senator McCarthy has emerged to charge once more that the Eisenhower Administration is harboring Communists, this time in the NLRB; Senator Bricker, an isolationist from way back and a long-time Eisenhower foe, will probably go to the convention with Ohio's votes in his pocket as a favorite son candidate. And as if all this were not enough, Senator Barry Goldwater of Arizona, the head of the GOP Senatorial Campaign Committee, has been giving his colleagues from more populated areas the cold shivers by his buckshot attacks on organized labor.

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In view of all this, it is small wonder that Eisenhower Republicans are getting nervous. One leading Eisenhower Republican, Attorney General Jacob K. Javits of New York, recently warned that the Old Guard planned to take advantage of the President's illness by trying to capture the convention. And thirty-nine-year-old Governor Fred Hall of Kansas put the matter very bluntly. Party promises to the farmer have not been kept, he said, and he sides with the farmers. The GOP, he said, has been alienating millions of people unnecessarily; Republicans have been at odds with labor for twenty-five years and "relations have now reached a deplorable stage." As a result of all this, Governor Hall thinks, the Republican Party is in such a "dismal situation" that serious doubt exists on its ability to win the 1956 election. "What's the matter?" the Governor asked. "With such assets as peace and prosperity, and the most popular President in American history, how could there be any doubt about the outcome?" That, it seems to us, is a good question. It will be interesting to see what kind of answers Governor Hall's fellow-Republicans will come up with between now and the 1956 convention.

SECURITY POLICIES

TWO separate modifications in the Government's loyalty-security program give promise that in the future fewer citizens will be harmed by capricious and irresponsible decisions. If the promise is fulfilled it will help to show that American democracy can function—even in severe crises—without violating or setting aside the democratic principles which inform it.

The first modification is a result of a recent ruling by Federal Judge Luther W. Youngdahl that the State Department, which has authority over the issuance of passports, cannot simply cite the existence of undisclosed "confidential information" as a reason for withholding a passport. In the past it had been unnecessary for the Department to reveal either the reason for refusing to grant a passport or the evidence upon which the decision was based. But in his ruling Judge Youngdahl declared that "more and more the courts have become aware of the irreparable damage which may be, has been, and is wrought by the secret informer and the faceless talebearer whose identity and testimony remains locked in confidential files." The basis for denying a passport must now be subjected to judicial inspection.

After Judge Youngdahl's decision was announced, Senator Hennings of Missouri praised it as a reaffirmation that "compliance with the Bill of Rights is the foundation of American democracy." As chairman of the Senate Subcommittee on Constitutional Rights, Senator Hennings is himself pushing for such a reaffirmation from those in charge of the Army's security-risk procedures. Under new procedures the Army must accept or reject a draftee on the basis of pre-induction inquiries. Testimony secured by the Subcommittee confirmed independent reports that until now soldiers whose character and military performance had been rated "excellent" were given "undesirable" discharges because of activities and associations known to the Army when they were inducted. In a sense the Army was damning them with other than honorable discharges for civilian activities—which were not themselves illegal.

The Senate Subcommittee's disclosures should help ensure that each inductee will be granted his due rights. Unfortunately the Subcommittee itself may be unable to bring about the fulfillment of early promise. In addition to internal discord and the loss of its chief counsel, it is weakened by the apathy of those whom it strives to defend.

POLITICAL INSPIRATION

THE literary selections of our legislators have interested us ever since we found some years ago that the quotation most favored by Congressmen was from *Hamlet:* "To thine ownself be true. . . Thou canst not then be false to any man." Intermittently, we have wondered if the admiration was extended to Polonius, the King's decayed adviser who utters the lines. As we considered legislator after legislator, and act after act, our opinions vacillated wildly.

We were heartened, therefore, when we heard that an anthology of poems selected by members of Congress as favorite sources of inspiration was recently published. We looked for a clue to stabilize our shifting opinions. Alas, the search was in vain, for the choice seems to have been dictated by the uncertain times, rather than by the legislators. Since so many pertinent political questions begin, "If Eisenhower doesn't run. . .," "If Stevenson were to lose the nomination. . .," "If the farmers' vote swings. . ." we should not have been surprised that the favorite poem was Kipling's "If." We were reminded of the opening lines, "If you can keep your head when all about you/Are losing theirs and blaming it on you/If. . ." But we could go no farther. With the current political situation in mind we could only sympathize with our Congressmen and sigh, "Yes, *if*."

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The Case of Ezra Pound

"IT IS ONLY PRUDENT TO REMIND OURSELVES THAT ONE ROOM AT ST. ELIZABETH'S IS A CLOSET WHICH CONTAINS A NATIONAL SKELETON"

SAM HYNES

THIS month Ezra Pound completes his tenth year in St. Elizabeth's Hospital as a patient committed by the United States Government. The occasion can scarcely be one of rejoicing for Pound (nor for anyone else sensitive to the implications of the case); but it does offer a convenient moment at which to re-evaluate those implications. For the case of Ezra Pound is a significant modern symbol, and it is only prudent that we Americans should from time to time remind ourselves that one room at St. Elizabeth's is a closet which contains a national skeleton.

In the ten years since Pound was returned to this country, the circumstances of his incarceration have been obscured by the partisanships which he seems to invoke. It is perhaps one of the most unfortunate characteristics of our time that complex situations tend to be reduced to simple oppositions of extremes —leftist vs. rightist, aesthete vs. philistine, egg-head vs. slob—and this has been particularly true in the case of Pound, who has, apparently by nature and by choice, made of himself a life-long symbol of extremity. To citizens antagonistic to modern poetry, the circumstances of Pound's confinement have seemed wryly symbolic—the modern poet in the madhouse where he belongs. To the patriots, St. Elizabeth's has seemed either fitting or too good for a traitor, depending on the degree of patriotic vindictiveness. To Pound's disciples, the government's treatment of the master has been an injustice which can only be erased by retiring him on a government pension.

But to less emotional souls, perhaps, the fact of Pound in Bedlam has been disquieting, a reflection of an apparently insoluble modern dilemma, of the way in which individual freedom and the common good have come to be seen as antithetical, and the curtailment of liberties a necessary step in the interests of national self-preservation; and of the frighteningly dominant role of politics in modern thought and action. Few thinking people would question the right of the government to act as it did; but many must be troubled by the fact that circumstances, or the system, or the nature of things in the modern world, could force the government to take such action against a distinguished artist.

THE real case against Pound is a confusing and unresolved one, and this, too, has made a simple evaluation of it difficult, and emotional mis-interpretations easy. The facts are these. Pound was indicted *in absentia* on July 25, 1943, for treason. He was arrested by American troops in Italy on May 5, 1945, and after a period of imprisonment in a military detention camp near Pisa, was flown to the United States. A superseding indictment for treason was returned against him in November of 1945. On motion of his own attorney, an examination of Pound's mental condition was made, and he was found insane and mentally unfit for trial. On December 21, 1945 the Court committed Pound to St. Elizabeth's Hospital in Washington; he has been there ever since.

Although the treason indictment remains in force, Pound has not been tried, and cannot be until he is once more declared sane; and so he remains touched by treason, but neither legally guilty nor innocent, committed, but not convicted. Consequently, the issues which he represents must remain ambiguous and undefined; the case asks questions—when is a maverick an enemy? should an artist allow political considerations of any kind to influence or control his mind? does the artist operate under the same restraints which govern the thought and conduct of other men? can a democracy afford dissident thought? and can it afford to silence it?—but it offers no answers. A trial might not have answered all, or indeed any of these questions specifically, but it might at least have clarified the basic opposition which they imply—the opposition of the individualism of the artist to the forces of conformity inherent in a democracy.

A trial might also have eliminated some of the accusations and antipathies which have appeared since Pound's arrest, which are not really relevant to the

Mr. Hynes, who has contributed to The Commonweal on several previous occasions, is a member of the English faculty at Swarthmore.

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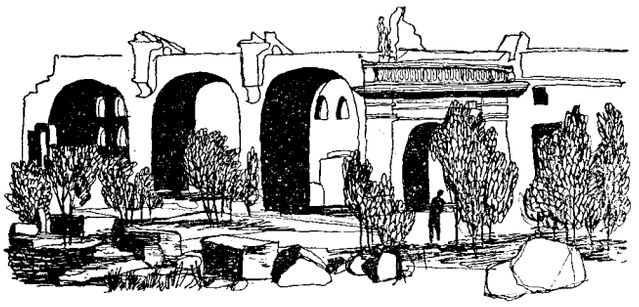
case. For Pound's treason has not often been a point of controversy among his critics; his guilt has simply been assumed and used as a weapon against persons and values with which he has been associated. The formal charge against Pound is that he "gave aid and comfort" to the enemy of the United States in a time of war by broadcasting propaganda from Rome; his most sensational "trial," however, had little to do with those broadcasts, although in the end he and



a number of friends, associates, and innocent bystanders stood convicted of a variety of crimes against society, humanity, and poetry. The occasion of Pound's great "trial" was, of course, the awarding of the Bollingen Prize in 1949.

In the uproar set off by the award of this prize to Pound for his "Pisan Cantos," the original issue—whether a poet under indictment for treason should be given a prize with the implicit approval of the indicting government—was almost immediately obscured by other, broader, and often vaguer issues. Mr. Robert Hillyer, who initiated the fracas in two articles in the *Saturday Review of Literature,* used the occasion to attack T. S. Eliot, Jung, the Mellon Foundation, the Librarian of Congress, and modern poetry in general, and even hinted at a dark conspiracy among the "New Critics."

The editors of the magazine gave Mr. Hillyer their full support (though his inaccuracies forced them to some retractions later), stating editorially that "we refuse to accept the anti-humanitarian ravings of an insane man, the incoherent medley of wild ideas, of symbols that reflect nothing but obscurity, as a work of genius." Here, at least, the major arguments against Pound's poems are clearly stated—the poems are "anti-humanitarian," and "obscure." By implication, poems worthy of prizes are neither. In the letters which Hillyer's attack provoked (seven to one in support of his position), these issues remained predominant.

THE problem at the heart of the Bollingen controversy is one fundamental to a democracy by its very nature. It is this: to what degree can thought antagonistic to the dominant intellectual tradition be encouraged? In principle, democracy implies freedom of thought, but in practice that freedom has been of necessity more or less limited within a range which we might describe as "humanitarian." Such limitation may have value as a mode of preserving a democratic tradition, but its dangers should also be obvious; its logical extreme is thought control and government censorship. (One should, in fairness to the *Saturday Review,* make it clear that the editors did not advocate suppression of Pound's work, but opposed public recognition and approval of it.)

To this central issue one might add others which are more narrowly critical, but which are related to the general problem: to what degree can moral or political judgments of a work of art be allowed to determine one's literary evaluation of it? are moral and aesthetic judgments in fact distinct? if so, which is to be primary? These questions are by no means limited to the Pound case; they are implicit in our Congressional investigations, in the policy of American libraries abroad, and in every situation in which government control is imposed upon cultural affairs. Pound simply offers an extreme case, in which it is somewhat easier to take sides for emotional reasons.

Not everyone, however, has sided against Pound; he has had from the start a more or less vocal band of partisans, both in this country and abroad. To these partisans, Pound has been a martyr in the cause of artistic freedom; but martyrs rarely attract disinterested judges, and in general the literary criticism of Pound's work published since the war has been weakened by the personal bias of the critics, so that one may conclude, in the end, that Pound has been as unfortunate in his friends as he has been in his enemies.

The *Cantos* may demand almost superhuman objectivity before they can be adequately evaluated as a poem, but it seems obvious that a final evaluation of Pound will recognize fully his tremendous influence on modern poetry, whether for good or ill. And the final judgment of Pound may well be that his most profound effect on modern poetry has been by precept rather than by example—via Imagism, of which he was the chief publicist but not the formulator, and via the work of T. S. Eliot. One might even say, without too much hyperbole, that Pound's greatest contribution to modern poetry was the two-hundred-odd lines he cut out of *The Waste Land.* But whatever we may ultimately decide about Pound's position as a poet, we can scarcely deny that he has served the cause of his art as he saw it with incredible selflessness and devotion over a long life, and that he, more than any other person of our century, changed the look, the sound, and the feel of poetry in English.

To many people it has seemed regrettable that a man of such great powers and achievements should, at the age of seventy, find himself faced with the

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prospect of spending the rest of his life confined by force to a mental institution. In recent years various men of good will, touched by Pound's case, have urged that he be released; Ernest Hemingway said last year: "Ezra Pound is a great poet, and whatever he did he has been punished greatly and I believe he should be freed to go and write poems in Italy where he is loved and understood. . . I believe this would be a good year to release poets."

Unfortunately, this does not seem a good year, either medically or legally. When Pound was first committed to St. Elizabeth's, he was described by a panel of psychiatrists as in "a paranoic state of psychotic proportions"; the Acting Superintendent of the hospital reported recently: "There has been no essential improvement in his condition since admission, and while no one can accurately predict the future the prognosis for his recovery does not appear good."

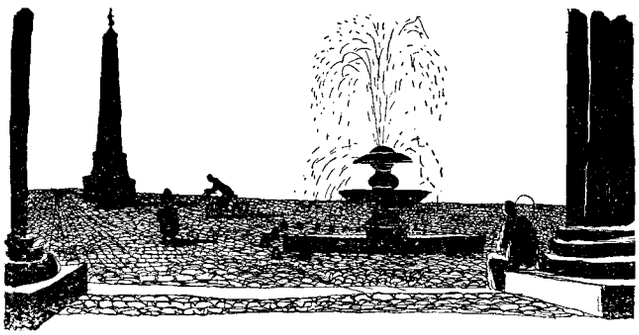
The legal prognosis is equally dim—there is apparently no way out except though a treason trial. Since a treason conviction may carry the death penalty, it is not subject to the statute of limitations; therefore, if at any time Pound should be declared sane, he would presumably be brought to trial. Without a trial, neither reprieve nor pardon nor executive clemency is possible, since these apply only to the modification of sentence. It seems most probable, then, that Pound will spend the rest of his life in confinement.

One should add that Pound's prospects if brought to trial do not look very promising. A treason conviction requires either a confession or the testimony of two eye-witnesses to an overt act. The government indictment against Pound cites half a dozen witnesses to his broadcasts from Rome, and to a layman, at least, it seems likely that a conviction would be returned. In the two cases most similar to Pound's—those of Robert Best and Douglas Chandler, who broadcast for Germany— sentences of life imprisonment were given, and were upheld on appeal.

In the meantime, Pound has adjusted to his circumstances in a way that would only be possible for a man totally dedicated to his work. Even in the Pisan prison camp he was able to write poetry which is at its best brilliantly lyric and profoundly moving. (It was for these "Pisan Cantos" that he received the Bollingen Prize). Since his commitment to St. Elizabeth's he has gone on with the Cantos—five have been published in the last year—and with a number of other projects as well. He has continued his study of Chinese and has published two volumes of translations from Confucius; and he has also produced a "version" of Sophocles' *Trachiniae,* which was performed on the BBC's Third Programme, and has been published in the *Hudson Review.*

Pound's continuing concern for the dominion of letters is also evident in the amount of time which he devotes to young poets and scholars. He has many visitors, and keeps up a vast correspondence. His efforts in behalf of young people whom he considers deserving are often extensive and strenuous, if occasionally somewhat grandiloquent. (One English admirer of Pound tells of receiving a letter from the master directing him to take care of a young writer who was "coming out your way." It turned out that the young man was actually on his way to Norway; since Norway is closer to London than to Washington, Pound had simply delegated his responsibility.) His memories of earlier and better days—London before the first World War, Paris in the '20's—are vividly detailed and accurate, and he is particularly courteous and helpful to students of those periods who seek his help. On the whole, he is receptive to any request for his time which has a reasonable motivation.

TEN years in St. Elizabeth's have had little effect on either Pound's manner or his thought. He is still jaunty and jocular in conversation, and extravagantly colloquial and phonetic in his letters ("As yu hv been here once yu don't need new permit," a typical letter begins). His most recent cantos show no withdrawal from his earlier extremes of form and thought, and are as difficult as ever: polyglot ("It can't all be done in one language," he says in Canto 86), pedantic (a chief source is a history of the American government published in 1856), and allusive (there are references to Harry Dexter White and to the Halloran case, among others). The new cantos are as unreconstructed socially and politically as ever: there are references to "Frogland," to "Wops" and "Der Jud," and to "the total dirt that was Roosevelt/And the



farce that was Churchill." On first reading they seem even more broken and fragmentary than the earlier cantos, less linked by discernible themes and levels of allusion, and generally less coherent; but perhaps this is the sort of first impression which drafts of Pound's cantos have always made. And certainly some of the old virtues are still there—the sensitivity to the extreme limits of language, the ear for speech rhythms and metrical effects (William Carlos Williams once

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remarked that Pound had "the most acute ear for metrical sequences, to the point of genius, that we have ever known"), and the occasional burst of sudden and delicate lyricism, as though the poet had for a moment burst from his shell of grievances, and found the world still there, and beautiful.

Because the poet is still there one cannot pity Pound —he has retained an integrity as poet which can be admired without reluctance. It is clear that he will go on now to the end of the *Cantos* regardless of what is done for him or about him, in St. Elizabeth's because he happens to be there, but with equal vigor in prison, or back at Rapallo, or anywhere else. He will go on blasting usury and preaching Social Credit, praising Mussolini and damning Roosevelt, as long as he has a voice and a listener. And however wrong-minded we may think all this is in a citizen of a democracy, we must, I think, admire it, however grudgingly, in the uncompromising poet.

In 1925 Hemingway wrote of Pound: "He has never been a pitiful figure. He has fought his fights with a very gay grimness and his wounds heal quickly. He does not believe that he came into the world to suffer. He is no masochist and that is one reason why he is not a minor poet." Now, thirty years and a world war later, there seems little to add to this, except regret that the years between have forced us as a nation to reject a major poet.

THROUGH CARTOONISTS' EYES

Changing Britain

MICHAEL P. FOGARTY

I AM not sure how often Americans see the work of British cartoonists. In the Thirties, when I was young, the most famous cartoonist in Britain was David Low. There were others, of course, some of them technically as good as he was. But somehow they never quite rang the bell on life in general and public affairs in particular as Low, in his day, did.

Above all, Low enriched us with Colonel Blimp, that fine old gentleman of the Empire school, pontificating in his walrus moustache and a Turkish bath. And I feel sure he, at least, is known in America. Blimp was not only a gentleman but sympathetic. However—and here was the real Low touch—he was also rather stupid and contemptible. We laughed at as well as with him, and the laugh was half a sneer. There was a lot of that sneer in Low's work, and much violence and hatred. There were guns, and bedraggled doves, and Peace having obviously been violated. There were capitalists and class hatred. There was contempt for the fools and reactionaries whose mismanagement of the world could be seen so easily with the help of a little common sense. The spirit of his work was all of a piece with the agitated, bitter atmosphere general in those days; with hunger marches and peace petitions and the Oxford Union resolution against fighting for King and Country; with dark talk by men like Clement Attlee and Stafford Cripps about Capitalist sabotage of the next Labor government and how it must be put down.

The war came and went. Low went right on drawing. Only now, like Orwell's Rutherford in *1984,* he seemed no longer to be relevant. Was he simply growing old? His old skill was still there though; it was simply that his themes and spirit no longer corresponded to the times. Today the cartoonist whose standing is nearest to that of Low in the Thirties is Giles of the *Daily Express,* or perhaps one should say the *Express* team as a whole: Giles, Osbert Lancaster, and Barry Appleby, the creator of the Gambols. And their replacement of Low is significant.

In style the three *Express* men are completely different. Osbert Lancaster's characters are strictly English and upper middle class. His style is rather precious, and he manages with one or two characters at a time and not much detail. Barry Appleby draws the middle to lower middle class. His Gaye Gambol looks as if she used to be somebody's secretary, and George Gambol is an office worker, high enough to have been on a business trip to the U.S.A., but not to have grown beyond the life in a modern, semi-detached, suburban house which most of the English middle class shares. George sweeps the paths, fiddles with the car, helps (with a bit of pushing) with the washing-up; Gaye cooks, likes new dresses, and keeps George comfortable and under control. They have twin beds, an interest in sex, but no children, and are in all ways typical of the most typical and rapidly increasing section of the British people today. Giles, the greatest of the three, is also the most universal. He will take you right into the factory or the farm or among the house-

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Mr. Fogarty, for many years associated with the Catholic Social Guild, is The Commonweal's regular correspondent in Britain.

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wives in the shops or the kids playing in the streets. He is at his best with the ordinary man.

On such matters of style and emphasis these three cartoonists will differ. But there are certain things which all the *Express* team have in common. Human failings and the seamy side of life are their bread and butter, as of every cartoonist. But there is nothing vicious about them. They are not hating anyone. They are not inciting anyone. They poke fun at politicians and bureaucrats, but do not give the impression that they could do these ignorant reactionaries' jobs better themselves. There is fun, there is point, but it is all very human; there is none of Low's venom.

The Giles-Lancaster-Appleby style is exactly what the British public today feels and wants. All sorts of people have tried to make our flesh creep these last few years with the goings-on behind the Iron Curtain, the chronic threat to the balance of payments, or the emergence of a new Asia and Africa. In the Thirties we got thoroughly worked up over China and Abyssinia and Spain and half a dozen other places equally remote from our own immediate concerns. But today we just will not get worked up. It is not merely that we are too busy cultivating our own gardens, though it is quite true that a lot more of us have gardens to cultivate than ever did before. It is rather, I think, that three things have happened to change our whole way of reacting to both internal and external events.

FIRST of all, in the Thirties we had a bad conscience over unemployment, social insecurity, colonialism, and the breakdown of the peace we thought we had made at Versailles. Low's cartoons were one of our escape mechanisms. We wanted scapegoats. He identified them for us, and sprayed poison at them. Today we are conscious in these matters at most of venial sin, and people with good consciences sleep soundly. I dare say that we sleep too soundly, that there will be an awakening. But it will come very slowly.

Secondly, it took the war to convince a good many of us that British democracy is basically sound. In the Thirties, nagging voices kept telling us that we did not merely lack policies to deal with unemployment and the rest, but that there were fundamental faults in our social system which would prevent our ever finding such policies at all. I can date pretty exactly the time when those voices went silent. It was the fall of France in 1940. I was in the hospital then, after some hectic weeks keeping off the German army with cannon dating from the Boer war. Jacked up with bricks, and with a following wind, they would reach about half the distance of a German 88, and no one needed to tell us in that ward about the failure of British politicians to keep the peace or prepare for war. We were there because of it, that failure. But when Churchill came through on the radio to say that we would fight on, I do not remember anyone reflecting that the social order we were supposed to be defending was rotten at its roots. Once the choice ceased to be academic, we knew very well that what we had was worth holding. The nagging voices came out once more in 1944 and 1945. But when the wave of war and postwar reforms delivered, over and above victory, the social advance over which our consciences had been troubled in the Thirties, they died down again. We still grumble, quarrel, and strike, and there is plenty to grumble and strike about. But there is a basic confidence in our institutions which in Low's day there was not.

And thirdly, events since 1945 have killed many of the old, simple beliefs about peace, prosperity, and the stupidity of the politicians and diplomats and business men who could not secure them. We still kick the diplomats around when they let by a security leak, as in the recent case of Burgess and Maclean. But we do

even that in a spirit very unlike Low's. There had been great praise of Scotland Yard, great criticism of military and Foreign Office security. Then, one day, seven key files disappeared from Scotland Yard in suspicious circumstances. Next day, Osbert Lancaster's drawing had no caption—just the newspaper poster about the missing files, and an M.I.5 and a Foreign Office man giving each other the subdued grin as they passed it.

We have not ceased to take serious things seriously; we have not lost our ideals. But neither Lancaster nor anyone else today imagines that the strategy of the cold war or the national economy is anything but an expert's job. We have grown up enough to feel a good-humored cynicism about ways and means: a very good atmosphere, judging from history, for diplomacy and the other practical arts. We are prepared not to shoot the pianist, not merely because he is doing his best, but because we know that piano-playing is difficult and that we do not have an unlimited supply of players in reserve. But we still like the cartoonists to stick him with a pin occasionally—in a friendly, humane sort of way—lest he forget.

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Voices from the Philippines

THERE were six of them and among them you could see examples of most of the racial strains that make up the Filipino native: Malayan, Indonesian, Chinese and Caucasian.

Fernando Esguerra was more Caucasian than any of the others. He was white enough to have passed for a Spaniard. He was also the youngest and the most eloquent, and the most nervous. He sat with his feet drawn up under him as though ready to spring out of his chair, and one or the other of his legs was usually vibrating with suppressed energy, particularly when he had to listen to somebody else talk. He laughed with great gusto, bouncing on his chair and slapping his knee hard and repeatedly, as when he told the story about the *carabao* flipping dung on the lady tourist with its tail. The earthy sense of humor contrasted somewhat with the long cigarette holder and the slightly natty clothes. Fernando was the only one who was not, strictly speaking, a trade union official. He was executive vice-president of the Federation of Free Farmers, founded shortly after World War II with the help of American Jesuit missionaries for whom Fernando had great admiration. He himself was a convert from Methodism.

After dinner we went back into the living room and the talk took an interesting turn into questions of predestination and free will and from there to differences of religious faith, particularly among the Filipinos, and the whole question of religious toleration, on which we all seemed to be in agreement. I think it was along in here somewhere that Fernando, speaking with great feeling and more eloquence than I can reproduce here, told us about one of his friends.

"The Federation of Free Farmers," he said, "is very active in organizing the poor tenant farmers in the area where the *Huks* were most successful. When you talk to these people you cannot attack Communism and let it go at that. They know too many Communists who are ready to die for them. I know one of them myself."

And Fernando added, "I know this man and I know that he worked and fought for the poor Filipinos and that he was willing to lay down his life for them many times, especially during the Japanese occupation. It is not easy to answer him, even though we know that not all priests are like the ones that he describes. I know too that when you speak to the Filipino farmers in the *barrios* you can't just attack Communism. You have to give them something better. You have to tell them how they can get enough to feed themselves and their children, how they can find a way out of the misery that surrounds them."

When Fernando spoke about this Communist, I couldn't help thinking it was like a voice from the past describing some hero of the French Resistance. You don't hear that kind of talk much anymore, but it is a good thing not to forget it. Fernando also told us about the "Paradise Islands" that some of the rich Filipino landlords own, where they can escape from their wives and invite their friends to drink and carouse, and where they corrupt the beautiful young daughters of their servants and their tenants. His voice rose with indignation as he spoke of it.

Another member of the delegation, which is making a guided tour of industrial cities under the aegis of the U. S. Department of Labor, was Henry Santos, treasurer of the Philippine Association of Free Labor Unions (PAFLU). A quiet, serious man, Mr. Santos had written me a letter several weeks before correcting what he thought was an unfair impression created by my column of last February 4 ("Incident on the Manila Waterfront"). I had discussed the ouster of Jim Tully and Cyril O'Brien from the Philippines for expressing sympathy for striking ship officers. Mr. Santos pointed out that his own organization had joined the picketline of the striking officers, even though the latter belonged to a rival group, the Federation of Free Workers, and that the PAFLU disaffiliated from the Philippine Trade Unity Council because the latter admitted to membership a union that was trying to break the FFW strike. I was impressed by his statements and his honesty and I am sorry if I did an injustice to PAFLU.

Several other members of the delegation were from the FFW, the federation founded in 1947 with the help of the heroic Jesuit, Father Walter Hogan. One was a leader of the striking union which may yet salvage something from a bad situation as the result of government intervention. Others were from independent unions and one, Modesto Segovia, was president of the Allied Workers Association, a federation of about 5,000 workers.

Besides the AWA and the FFW (18,000) and the PAFLU (15,000) and the PTUC (23,000), there is the PLUM (20,000) and the NLU (40,000) and a host of lesser federations and independent unions. We talked a good deal about the advantages of unity and the terrible need of it in the Filipino labor movement, still struggling against great opposition to organize the workers and obtain for them the most elementary rights.

I hope that the friendships that have obviously

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been created among the men by their trip together in America will endure when they return to their native land and help to bring about the unity that they so ardently desire. Certainly American trade unionists, about to enjoy the blessings of unity for the first time in twenty years, can feel nothing but affection and sympathy for their Filipino brothers who are laboring under great difficulties.

NO REQUIEM FOR THE CIO

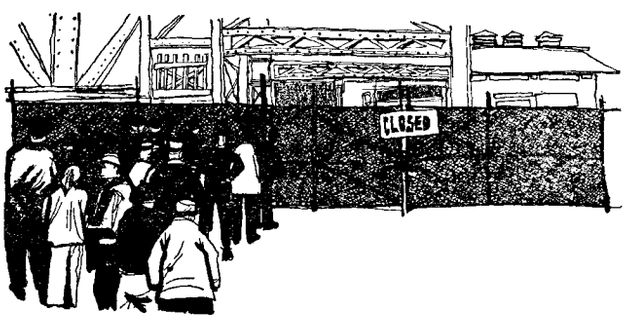
I EXPECT to see these men again at the AFL-CIO merger convention in New York this month. This is the great event of the year, and of many years, for union men all over the country.

Already you hear mutterings from members of the CIO that their organization is being swallowed up by the AFL. One of my friends keeps saying, in reference to the merger, "When we join the AFL. . ." And he doesn't like the idea. He thinks that the principal thing that will come of it is that the militant, progressive spirit of the CIO will simply be smothered by the long-standing conservatism of the old Federation.

I can't go along with that kind of talk. I know conservatives in the CIO and progressives in the AFL, and vice versa. I don't see any reason why we shouldn't regard this thing as what it is, namely a marriage, rather than a funeral. In a true marriage both parties have a moderating influence on each other, and this isn't necessarily a bad thing. In the best marriages both parties have an inspirational influence on each other, and there is no doubt that this is usually a good thing.

However, the CIO has the smaller membership of the two organizations (about 5,000,000 to the AFL's 10,000,000). At the beginning at least, the AFL will supply the two top officers and will have majorities on the governing bodies. Therefore, there is a sense in which the CIO will be submerged as well as merged, and before that happens it may be in order to pay one last tribute to this organization that has made so much labor history since its founding on the day John L. Lewis banged Big Bill Hutchinson in the nose at the AFL convention of 1935.

Let us never forget that the CIO was right on the issue which divided that convention: industrial unionism as opposed to craft unionism in the big, unorganized industries of steel, auto, rubber, electrical products, etc. Lewis and his followers were voted down, but they would not accept the decision. They founded the CIO to do the job of organizing these mass production industries, and they succeeded. Following their success, the AFL came along and picked up millions of workers in its own unions, many of them on the basis of the same industrial unionism which they had repudiated at the 1935 convention. The AFL organized many other workers by using the CIO as its organizer, telling employers all over the country, "Hurry up and sign with us before the CIO bogeyman gets you." Sometimes they even waited until the workers had signed up with the CIO and then at the last minute had the employers sign up with the AFL.



How many of those 10,000,000 AFL members rightly belong to the CIO nobody will ever know. It is not something we should dwell on too long. For they shall be one flesh. "May their children be like young olive trees round about their board . . . and may they see their children's children, and peace upon Israel."

JOHN C. CORT.

TWO POEMS

By Sona Raiziss

CONSCIENCE

The wind imports a flash of heaven
toward the squalor of stained walls
and the closed memory around the living.

Murderer, you crack the axe down
on the shinbone of the tree, and roots raving
it drops to die where it was born.

Inveterate burglar, thieve the goods of God
but in the body your infamous heart suspends
hanged from the gibbet in man's blood.

WAYFARERS WITHIN

Inventors of other worlds we who wander
on the cross the times have maggot-eaten,
empty the blown cheeks of a plainsong.
At our feet the stars, the cosmic dustroads
and the dark plunge of wells . . and there
we see no Magdalen dip up the water
and there that man is heard blaspheming
who hangs upon the olive tree
upon the purple back of hills at evening.

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THE SCREEN

JENNIFER'S DOVE, JOAN'S BEE

PERHAPS the strangest thing in connection with "Good Morning, Miss Dove" is that American film makers, after the successful English production of "Goodbye, Mr. Chips," did not give us a whole series of movies about odd-but-lovable school teachers influencing a long string of children through the years. It is particularly fortunate for this new picture that the pleasant, though easily exhausted theme, wasn't worn out by forerunners.

"Good Morning, Miss Dove" follows the pattern: while the elderly, spinsterish school teacher lies on her hospital bed awaiting an operation, a series of flashbacks reveals Miss Dove's relationships during the past thirty-five years with her pupils, who now anxiously hope for the recovery of their beloved teacher. Of course, when they were kids, they didn't love the strict, formidable Miss Dove, but they respected her, and as they grew up they realized what an influence for good she had been.

Like "Chips" and "The Long Gray Line," "Miss Dove" is crowded with sentiment, episodes and characters. Jennifer Jones, helped by the makeup man, handles the lead role very well; but strangely enough, Director Henry Koster allowed her to play it in one key that becomes rather tiresome: the prim, tight-lipped martinet who shows no emotion beneath her gray, stern exterior. Even as a young girl, when she resolved to become a teacher to pay back the money her father embezzled before his death, there was nothing frivolous about Miss Dove.

A badge of merit should go to Henry Koster for directing the extraordinarily large cast that surrounds Miss Jones. Robert Stack, Peggy Knudsen, Chuck Connors, Biff Elliot, Jerry Paris, John Hensley are among the many who do well with necessarily small but interesting roles. And credit should go to Eleanore Griffin who wrote, from Frances Gray Patton's novel, a deft and heart-warming script. It is with relief at the end that we hear Miss Dove say, "Whatever others may think of me, I have been happy." Her joy was the many children she guided. Many adults seeing this movie about the "terrible" Miss Dove will remember with gratitude some teacher of their childhood and enjoy the picture all the more.

AS self-centered as Miss Dove was selfless, and as demanding as Miss Dove was generous is the character played by Joan Crawford in "Queen Bee." Although an outsider married into a Southern family, Miss Crawford dominates the household and ruthlessly mows down anyone who interferes with her pleasure or plans. This is a role Miss Crawford has already perfected in other movies; it has a cold, calculated selfishness that makes it an extension of Craig's Wife plus sex in a Southern mansion.

For all of Joan's perfected performance (and she also never looked better) the whole picture seems a little silly. Again and again you wonder why Barry Sullivan, as Joan's husband, who has turned to drink, or John Ireland, as her ex-lover, or Betsy Palmer, as her sister-in-law now in love with John, don't tell this Queen Bee where to get off *at*. They know and she knows she's destroying the hive and everyone in it, and will soon destroy her visiting cousin (Lucy Marlow), through whose eyes we see much of this sordid story. Oddly enough, Jerry Wald has given this mediocre plot a lush production, and Director Ranald MacDougall (who also wrote the script from Edna Lee's novel) treats the whole piece as if it were classical tragedy instead of a melodramatic soap opera. For all its attempts at class, "Queen Bee" becomes boring long before Miss Crawford meets her doom.

FOR anyone who likes a good, swashbuckling historical picture, but hates the lower level nonsense that so often goes with such a movie, there is Pandro S. Berman's production of "Quentin Durward." Handsomely filmed in England and France with authentic castles and stunning scenery in Eastman Color and CinemaScope, "Durward" is both good to look at and fun to hear.

Much of the credit should go to Robert Ardrey, who started with Scott's novel and came up with a script that tells an exciting story, but has its tongue in cheek as to how good the good old days were. Admitting that knighthood was a drooping flower in 1465, the movie follows the fortunes of Quentin (Robert Taylor), a handsome, proud and somewhat obsolete figure who goes from England to France to bring back a bride to his aged uncle. Since this girl, "probably the wealthiest woman in Europe and certainly the most beautiful," is played with great charm by Kay Kendall, you know very well that she is reserved for someone other than the aged uncle.

Before the finale, Quentin tangles with King Louis XI (Robert Morley) and a series of other historical and fictional characters played to perfection by Alec Clunes, Duncan Lamont, George Cole, Marius Goring, Wilfred Hyde White and many others, who lend tone to the derring-do and court intrigue. Director Richard Thorpe keeps the picture moving at a pace faster than the old-fashioned serials and Robert Ardrey keeps dropping bright remarks. The net result: adults are going to like this even more than the kids will.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

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COMMUNICATIONS

MARRIAGE IN NORWAY

Washington, D. C.

TO the Editors: Last January 14 The Commonweal, in an editorial on "Marriage in Spain," remarked: "In Norway, for instance, it is reported that American non-Lutheran servicemen have to get permission from a Lutheran pastor before marrying." This charge has been more recently repeated on a nation-wide scale, particularly in the advertising of the Religious Information Bureau of the Supreme Council, Knights of Columbus, and I have therefore had occasion to investigate its authenticity. You and your readers will doubtless be as interested as I was to learn from none other than the Roman Catholic Bishop of Oslo, Norway, that the charge is false. Asked by Norwegian officials to make a statement, Bishop Jac. Mangers wrote on July 14:

"This is to certify that there is no Norvegian [*sic*] law which requires the approval for catholic [*sic*] marriages of a Lutheran or a non-Catholic clergiman [*sic*]. . . ."

STANLEY LICHTENSTEIN,
Managing Editor, *Church and State Review*.

"AGE OF DISCUSSION"

Carbondale, Colo.

TO the Editors: May I suggest to Mr. Kirk [Nov. 11] and other spokesmen of the new Conservatism that the reason the Conservatives are so little heard is that they have so little to say, and that what little they do say has so little relevance to the world we all live in.

I was for a long time a Conservative myself. I believed—as I still do—in human liberty, human dignity, and the enormous potential of the human mind and spirit. I came to realize slowly that the men and institutions which called themselves Conservative were only incidentally interested in these things, if they were interested in them at all. They talked about freedom; but the freedom they were and are most interested in is the freedom to make as much money as you can and to do with it exactly what you want. They talked about the dangers of centralized government; but they resisted fiercely every attempt to make state and local governments representative, to say nothing of honest.

It is clear to me that Mr. Kirk is not one of this primitive group. But he seems to me to be at fault for not recognizing that they, far more than Socialists or New Dealers, are his real enemies. The latter may be wrong about many things, but they at least know that we are living in a industrialized, specialized, collectivized society, not in some Merrie England of small farmers and craftsmen, or some never-never land of two-fisted frontiersmen.

The problem the Conservatives should be thinking about is this: how are men to live in a world where they can exercise less and less control over the things that affect their lives, where their work is more and more remote and less and less necessary, where to a greater and greater extent they must make their living by making a kind of war on their fellow men —i.e.—by selling? How can we get our institutions under human control again? I have read some discussions of these problems—but only in a Left-wing Socialist publication, the *New Statesman and Nation*. The so-called Conservative publications do not seem to me to admit that such problems even exist.

The day a Conservative realizes that the most profoundly revolutionary, anti-Conservative institution in our country is not the C.I.O., but General Motors, there will be the beginnings of hope for the Conservative movement. But not until then.

JOHN HOLT.

"FILMS ON ART"

New York, N. Y.

TO The Editors: In 1952 the American Federation of Arts and this foundation joined in publishing "Films on Art," a catalogue of films on art together with important essays. It was then hailed as a notable contribution, invaluable to users of art films, and as a "Baedeker to the world of art" (Cominsky, *Saturday Review*). While this book is now three years old it remains unique. No other work of similar scope has appeared. Unfortunately, it seems unlikely that a new edition can be published in the near future; and of the edition of five thousand copies, one thousand remain. We would like to send a copy free, and postpaid, to any institution or group activity which can make good use of it. To obtain a copy, please write on official stationery to:

The Spaeth Foundation
32 East 69th Street
New York 21, N. Y.

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Battle of the Scrolls

JOSEPH A. FITZMYER

"THE greatest manuscript discovery of modern times" had to await the eminently readable prose of Mr. Edmund Wilson to be introduced to the American public. His account of the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, their contents and significance has now appeared in the form of a book. Originally written for the *New Yorker* (May 14, 1955), the account has been expanded by the addition of about ten paragraphs and two footnotes. A much larger, slightly less attractive and definitely less sensational book on the Scrolls was published by Millar Burrows at about the same time.*

Mr. Wilson and Dr. Burrows have quite different backgrounds and interests and one naturally expects their approaches to the "battle of the Scrolls" to be correspondingly divergent. Mr. Wilson is a journalist; Dr. Burrows is a Yale professor. But Mr. Wilson is also a litterateur with a flair for scholarship and research that has taken him half way around the world to consult experts on the Scrolls and to visit the sites that many of these experts have not seen themselves. Dr. Burrows, on the other hand, is the careful scholar, who presents to the non-scholarly world a popular account of the Scrolls—writing "with a man's pen, so that he who runs may read." He speaks with authority, having been the Director of the American School of Oriental Research in Jerusalem in 1947-48, when the Scrolls were first brought there.

Dr. Burrows' book has an advantage over Mr. Wilson's in giving to the reader an English translation of most of the non-biblical literature of the Essene sect that has appeared so far, including the Scrolls published by the Hebrew University at the end of last year. Going into much greater detail than does Mr. Wilson, he takes up questions of palaeography, textual criticism and the dating of the Scrolls.

To Mr. Wilson we are indebted for a briefer and more entertaining account of the Qumrân Scrolls. The result of his extensive researches is reliable in its factual account, often bringing to light details and intrigues that had hitherto not appeared even in the scholarly publications. His historical judgments are usually quite sound. His characterizations and pen-sketches of personalities connected with the work on the Scrolls are precious. When informing the reader of the contents of the Scrolls, he is accurate.

BUT when it comes to the significance of these Scrolls, one can only describe Mr. Wilson's attitude as supercilious. In this domain of his research he has been guided by two colorful characters, M. André Dupont-Sommer (professor at the Sorbonne and ex-priest, protesting to be a "disinterested scholar") and Mr. David Flusser (a Jewish scholar of sorts from Prague, for whom all the world "save himself is out of step.") Like them, Mr. Wilson assumes that the only competent interpreter of these Scrolls is the "independent scholar," uninhibited by "various religious commitments." Yet when he is confronted with the fact that the overwhelming majority of scholars now working on the Scrolls have some religious commitment, Mr. Wilson resorts to the implication that the scholars are keeping the real facts from the laymen. These facts are vital to Judaism and Christianity, he says: the authority of the sacred Masoretic text is impaired because manuscripts of the Hebrew Old Testament exist with different readings; Christianity has drawn ideas from Essenism; "the uniqueness of Christ is at stake."

"One would like to see these problems discussed," expostulates Mr. Wilson. Well, Dr. Millar Burrows has done just that, and he is a scholar with religious commitment. But he is aware of the fact that the majority of the Scroll-material is still to be published. He is aware that the time has not yet come to take definite positions on many of the challenging problems the Scrolls have raised. Dr. Burrows' book shows clearly that we are faced at present with as many hypotheses as facts. Consequently, the reticence of the scholars to discuss Mr. Wilson's problems is quite understandable.

There is good reason for excitement about the Dead Sea Scrolls. Their importance for the study of the Hebrew Old Testament and of the origins of Christianity is only beginning to be assessed. Previous to the discovery of the Scrolls in the caves of Qumrân, the oldest manuscript of the Hebrew Old Testament was dated 895 A.D. Now Scrolls and fragments, varying in size from part of a single word to whole

*THE SCROLLS FROM THE DEAD SEA. By Edmund Wilson. Oxford University Press. $3.25.
THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS. By Millar Burrows. Viking. $6.50.

Father Joseph A. Fitzmyer, S.J., is engaged in Scriptural research at Johns Hopkins University.

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sentences, carry us back about 1000 years earlier. The St. Mark Isaiah Scroll, dated *circa* 100 B.C., contains all of the sixty-six chapters. Fragments which number in "the tens of thousands" have been found and preliminary reports of their study announce that two-thirds of some books have been recovered. So far fragments of every book of the Hebrew Bible have turned up, with the exception of "Esther."

But Mr. Wilson has scarcely mentioned the importance of these manuscripts for the study of the Old Testament. Dr. Burrows, however, has explained how some of these Scrolls bear witness to the scrupulous care of Jewish scribes throughout the centuries in transmitting to us the text of the Hebrew Bible. Others, however, have brought to light Hebrew texts agreeing, not with the Hebrew recension of the Masoretes, but with the Greek version of the Septuagint. This fact has taught us a new esteem for the ancient Greek translation, which was often judged in the past to be quite free. Now we know how slavishly faithful it was to a previously unknown Hebrew recension slightly different from our present-day Hebrew text. These Scrolls are revealing the multiplicity of recensions of the Old Testament books that existed before the closing of the canon at the end of the first century A.D. But they are facts that will scarcely affect the Bible of the ordinary layman.

PERHAPS that is why Mr. Wilson has preferred to write about early Christianity and the "explosive possibilities" of the Scrolls. He seems to think that the Scrolls are going to do away with "dogma and divine revelation" and reveal the rise of Christianity as "simply an episode in human history." It is certain, indeed, that the Scrolls will shed more light on the rise of Christianity. Students of Christian origins have been pointing out for a long time that Christianity is not without roots in the Jewish and Greek cultures of the last centuries B.C. Indeed, Christianity has always looked upon itself as the organic outgrowth of Judaism. "Do not think that I have come to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I have not come to destroy, but to fulfill." Is it strange, then, that a manuscript discovery should shed some detailed light on this organic outgrowth?

But one is tempted to ask Mr. Wilson how the Scrolls are going to reveal Christianity in all its nakedness to be nothing more than "an episode in human history," "the product of a traceable sequence of pressures and inspirations, out of one branch of Judaism." The early Christian communal meal is now found to have had a prototype in the Essene communal repast (with a priest blessing bread and wine). Are we to believe that this effectively puts an end to the Christian dogma of the Eucharist? Of course, Mr. Wilson does not descend to these details; it is more convenient for him to stick to a "rooted assumption" of his own. His brand of historical interpretation in this regard reminds one of nineteenth century rationalism.

Mr. Wilson has rightly criticized the New Testament scholars for boycotting the Scrolls. This was certainly true in the beginning, probably because many of them did not have an adequate training in Hebrew and the Semitic background necessary to handle these texts. Now the picture is changing, as can be seen by glancing at the bibliography offered by Dr. Burrows.

One significant change in New Testament scholarship is already apparent as a result of the Scrolls. Some of the positions, which Mr. Wilson labels as "liberal," are being abandoned or at least considerably modified. It was the fashion to regard the Johannine dualism of Light-Darkness, Truth-Perversity as a "Gnostic" element. Now this same dualism has turned up in the Essene documents in a form that can scarcely be Gnostic. Dr. Burrows remarks, "What may be said without any exaggeration is that the Gospel and epistles of John and the Dead Sea Scrolls reflect the same general background of sectarian Judaism. The Scrolls thus show—and this has not always been recognized—that we do not have to look outside of Palestinian Judaism for the soil in which the Johannine theology grew."

Let me emphasize that we cannot expect to derive all the Semitic traits of the New Testament from the dissident sect of the Essenes. A prudent course of interpretation must be steered between the Scylla of Pan-Essenism and the Charybdis of the rejection of the Qumrân discoveries. Even the use of a label like "Pan-Essenism" is dangerous, because it will tend to drive away the uninitiated and the undiscerning. In the present state of our knowledge Essene literature offers the closest parallels for a good number of early Christian practices and tenets. To deny this is folly. That is why the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls has been deemed so important.

Dr. Burrows' evaluation of the Scrolls and their effect on the study of early Christianity emphasizes their real value. "It has even been said" he writes, "that the discoveries will revolutionize New Testament scholarship. This may perhaps cause some alarm. There is no danger, however, that our understanding of the New Testament will be so revolutionized by the Dead Sea Scrolls as to require a revision of any basic article of Christian faith. All the scholars who have worked on the texts will agree that this has not happened and will not happen."

The Dead Sea Scrolls will not revolutionize Christian *theology*, but they will give a new direction to New Testament scholarship, and the historian of Christian dogma will not be able to neglect them in the future.

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Ordeal and Achievement

THE INMOST LEAF. By Alfred Kazin. Harcourt, Brace. $4.75.

By JOSEPH M. DUFFY, JR.

WHEN he was twenty-seven Alfred Kazin published a precociously bold and spacious interpretation of modern American prose literature, *On Native Grounds*. Now at forty, midway in his journey, Mr. Kazin has put together a selection from essays and reviews written over the past fifteen years. The material in *The Inmost Leaf* appeared first in such diverse journals as *The New Yorker, The New York Times Book Review,* and *Partisan Review*. In the twenty-eight papers of this volume the subjects range from Proust to e. e. cummings and from Thoreau to Simone Weil. Although the book includes a fifty-page study of William Blake, most of the essays are very brief, some of them *aperçus* of three to four pages. Even in his shortest piece, however, Mr. Kazin is able to stimulate the reader.

Not, of course, so exciting a publication as *On Native Grounds, The Inmost Leaf* is nevertheless a welcome event. These essays which at first glance seem to have no more relation one to the other than their proximity between covers are, in fact, genuinely linked by the quotation from Melville from which the title is taken and particularly from one part of this quotation: "Lord, when shall we be done growing? As long as we have anything more to do, we have done nothing." What Mr. Kazin admires most in an artist is a passionate commitment to his craft out of which the life of art is created and a prodigious independence in rejecting any pattern of existence outside of that imposed by the daemon within him. Appropriately Mr. Kazin's first sentence—in an essay on Joyce—is: "He was an outlaw to the end." For men like Joyce or Proust or Kafka are symbolic and heroic figures to Kazin: they are natural outlaws, repudiators of the ordinary and factitious routine, dedicated to discovering through their art a form in which the chaos of reality may be precariously contained. In following their craft they have sought a mithridatic potion to ward against the poisonous languor or the desperate corruption or the feverish contradictions of the world around them. An independent in politics and a naturalist in philosophy Mr. Kazin is, among critics, himself a kind of outlaw—admirably so. He is neither fossilized in a scholarly mold nor fashionably blown aloft in new critical extravagances. His is simply the wholehearted and energetic attachment of a sensitive moral and aesthetic intelligence to the profession of letters.

Among so many items it is difficult to single out particular ones for comment. Certainly the long piece on Blake is a first-rate job. Combining a sympathy for his subject, a talent for close reading of particular poems, and sensible generalizing power, Mr. Kazin cogently structures the achievement of that great and terrifying poet. The essay on F. Scott Fitzgerald suggests how fatally the author of *The Great Gatsby* was involved in the glamorous myth he helped to create. And writing on Dreiser, Mr. Kazin rightly contrasts the contempt of Frank Norris and Dos Passos for their characters with Dreiser's rude yet, in his best work, grand and innocent sincerity in character portrayal.

Perhaps the measure of Kazin's worth may be summed up in his regard for the dying words of the artist in James's "The Middle Years"—words which are, in effect, the ultimate cry of all artists: "We work in the dark—we do what we can—we give what we have. Our doubt is our passion, and our passion is our task." Kazin is capable of recognizing the ordeal and the achievement of such a voice. The same cannot be said of so many others: not of those druids, the writers of appreciative essays, who perform their specious sacerdotal function at the shrine of art; nor of those lean dry birds, the system-makers, whose view of the landscape is from above, remote and paradigmed to beautiful vagueness; nor yet of those invertebrates, the sham scholars who nibble at decay and with solemn greed digest the morsels.

A Younger Willy Loman

CASH McCALL. By Cameron Hawley. Houghton Mifflin. $3.95.

By NORA MAGID

IF memory serves, time was when the novel used to explore the range of possibility within the human condition. Today, under the somewhat belated impact of economics and psychology, we have that phenomenon, the full-dress analysis that concentrates not so much on people as on institutions. *Cash McCall,* the latest entry (*Executive Suite* was a recent one from the same source), is a primer in plastics, replete with tips to the tycoon and a defense of the American Way as the best of all possible ways.

The book sets into opposition two types basic to big business: the contemporary ideal of the company man, as against that vanishing American, the rugged individualist. The former is Grant Austen, president of Suffolk Moulding. His problems are acute, and we share them all, down to the most intimate administrative and mechanical detail. His broodings carry us into the territory of taxation, personnel, profits and losses, competition, controls, politicking. His thoughts and his actions are freighted with an excess of minute and sometimes irrelevant and vulgarly anti-climatic data.

When all his many conflicts begin to close in on him, Grant

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Austen decides he must sell out. This he discusses with his daughter, while his wife lies awake in writhing recognition of the fact that Grant seems to be in love with Lory rather than with her. She is of course quite wrong, since it is obviously his factory with which he is emotionally involved. But she arrives at a solution which eventually does work. "Before she had come to that truth, Miriam's desperate loneliness had driven her far beyond the bounds of reason, goading her into the suspicion that there was something revoltingly abnormal in the relationship between her husband and their daughter. Now, long since, she had conquered the insane nightmare. It was all normal (*sic*), perfectly explainable, and the endpoint was plain. Lory *must* fall in love . . . so wildly and passionately, so totally and completely, that affection for her father would fade to such a thing by comparison that it would never cast a shadow over their marriage. A faintly bittersweet smile crossed Miriam Austen's face. . . ."

Biding her time, the wife turns to community service, which is the socially acceptable outlet for frustration in the home. The daughter permits herself to be absorbed by her father, whom she has failed in the first place by not having been born a boy. She hangs on to her last shred of feminine identity by insisting on becoming an artist, a profession she identifies with essential womanhood. She is now "the Mickey Spillane of the kid book racket," and she has all kinds of qualms about whether or not she is a human being at all, let alone a woman.

The psychopathology of everyone's daily life in the Austen household is resolved when finally, and expectedly, after a tremendously oblique and dramatic buildup, salvation materializes in the form of the hero. With a flourish reminiscent of "Saxon, I am Roderick Dhu!" Cash McCall introduces himself. Having already been described from everyone else's point of view, here he now is to clarify further his own position and function. He likes to make money, he feels no guilt at being, not a company man, but the heathen in the temple of industry, the man who cannot be absorbed by the group. He never has to dirty his hands either, or to compromise in any way. "There's something fine and good about a man with Cash McCall's standards," one of the many faceless company men has said. "Time after time, I've seen him pass up extremely attractive deals, perfectly legitimate in every way, simply because he felt that—no, not even that there was a moral flaw—simply because he suspected that someone might think him unfair. Or perhaps *unsporting* is the better word." So, in his own off-beat way, Cash does belong. He acts as he does out of no inner compulsion, but out of a desire to conform with what is expected of him. He is Willy Loman, turned rich and clever and dashingly handsome ("tall, dark, loose-shouldered, tight-hipped, his face square-cut and block-jawed, strong-boned—like a young Highland warrior in an old portrait!")

He makes his usual clean sweep. When he buys the company—he is a trader and buys to sell again for quick, sure, and enormous profits —he emancipates everyone from everything. Grant Austen is freed from problems of management and can go on to doing something dimly do-goody in Washington. He has two million dollars he didn't have before, and he efficiently transfers his dependence from his daughter to his wife. His wife, twittering like a schoolgirl, has at last succeeded her daughter to the coveted position of coffee-klatsch confidante. The daughter is disposed of when it conveniently turns out that McCall is the mysterious man with whom she has all along been in love anyhow. So she marries him, and there aren't going to be any psychological repercussions either.

One wonders sometimes where these men get their naive heroines. Lory's first meal with Cash smacks of Marjorie Morningstar's ectasy over rice pudding at the Chambord. Lory "felt herself frightened by inadequacy. She had been aware that Cash lived in an entirely different world than she had ever known,

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but it was not until now, seeing him in a gourmet's role, that she was alerted to the danger that her own ignorance lay between them as a separating moat, threatening the possibility of a shared life." All this because he is eating melon with ham. " 'Jambon d'Ardennes,' Cash whispered, answering the question that she had just told herself she dared not ask."

The book is full of unmotivated and abrupt passions and actions. There is a host of minor faceless characters, each undistinguishable from the other, though each is always carefully tagged with both his names. Their problems and their probings are thrown in for good measure, and it is quite difficult to keep track of who is having which administrative or personal difficulty and why. It is most difficult of all to explain the undeniable appeal of such an approach. Since the book abounds in homilies—lessons on how to run a corporation, how to manage a hotel, how to be a woman, a wife, a chef, a millionaire—perhaps it is the pragmatic approach that entrances. Or can it be simply the dizzying gratification to be derived from a heroine so articulate that she can coyly ask the man she loves, "What have you been imagining about me—that I've been living in some kind of fairy-tale world where there wasn't any such thing as income-tax—or phenol-formaldehyde resins or double-ram presses or thermoplastic extruders? Would you like me to give you some hints on how you can reduce cycle-time with electronic preheating? Or would you prefer my ideas on the advantages of the declining balance method of amortizing mold costs?" Cash "laughs his incredulity." So do we.

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A Big Little Novel

THE TREE OF MAN. By Patrick White. Viking. $4.50

By SEYMOUR KRIM

THE dust jacket touts Mr. White's book as a big novel; the words *great* and *universal* and *timeless* are used, the tone is respectful if not humble, and the reader embarks quite impressed. But the very first page tells the average well-intentioned reader that these seas are going to be choppy and a challenge to his self-control and patience. For Mr. White has obviously set out to write a big, timeless, universal and great novel with too much emphasis on these abstractions and too little consideration for the reader's enjoyment. "Eternity is in love with the productions of time"; but Mr. White wants to escape the noose of time with all its precise, detailed considerations, and place as well, and give us Man and Woman in all their nakedness. The result is not happy.

Mr. White, who has written three previous novels which have won praise from discerning reviewers, is writing about Australia—presumably the New South Wales district which he knows well and which figures so prominently in this novel. I say "presumably," because nowhere in this large harvest of words is the time and place definitely given

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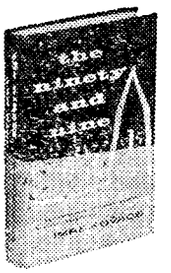

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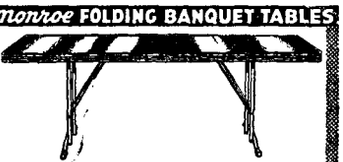

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—timelessness and universality must be served, even if the reader is bored—and one can only hazard certain conclusions. The reason Mr. White's omission of these ordinary facts is intrusive and somewhat arch is that he is writing a naturalistic prose, which feeds off such concrete phenomena, not a chaste, symbolic prose such as Kafka's. Nevertheless one can be sure that the hero and heroine who spend their lifetimes together working a farm on the edge of the wilderness in New South Wales are Stan and Amy Parker, Mr. White's modern Adam and Eve. As characters, both are convincing and real; for each virtue they possess there is a fault to match it, and as portraits of living people they are unusually well-rounded. One's criticism is not with the author's people, all of whom seem well-observed and authentic types, but with what he does with them and the somewhat pretentious air he has of glorifying the common man and woman because of their commonness, not because they transcend it.

Stan Parker marries Amy at about the turn of the century and takes her off to this patch of uncultivated land left to him by his father. Here Stan begins to carve out a home and farm for himself and Amy, and Mr. White's description of Stan's modest, loyal attitude to the land and Amy's mixture of pride and feminine acceptance of the hard life she is living is first-rate, in my opinion, for what it is. But in this book the edge is always taken off something you truly like by what follows—by some indispensable act of self-indulgence, artifice or pretension on the author's part. Thus Mr. White exaggerates the significance of his two chief characters' adaptation to life on the farm. Each small thought or feeling that Stan or Amy have is set down with all of its colloquial flavor, lack of grammar, lack of insight (on occasion), and lack of knowledge, since Stan and Amy have had little or no formal education: but Mr. White's wishful prose turns it all into a paean to the Folk, regardless of whether it is justified in a given situation. The underlying philosophy of his book is that Stan and Amy in all their confusion and non-intellectual hard work are finally the most virtuous representatives of mankind, the kind of people the Lord respects and honors. The flavor and humanity of the author's approach gives his book a degree of artistic truth, although its main claims upon the memory are the Proustian thoroughness and the spontaneous informality with which the author presents this material. But Stan and Amy's complacent ignorance, lack of development, general primitivism in practically every aspect of life except farming struck me as finally boring—they bore themselves, their two children, the reader, and who knows?—maybe even Mr. White, as he plugged away at his opus.

However, Patrick White knows too many tricks to be a mere plugger, unlike the grand innocent American folk-writer Dreiser; but when you set out to write a deliberately important work, lack of inspiration can be disguised by the

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imitation of having something long and earnest to say. White uses up many pages, veering here and there with Stan and Amy as his center, but in time the reader knows that something is awry, and no amount of verbal skill or folk-liveliness in the writing can conceal it. When the author gives as much importance to Stan and Amy's interminable small-talk as he does to the death of Ray Parker, their son, we know that a major lack of plan and design has been foisted on us.

Mr. White is not all bad—and one should keep in mind that a critic or book-reviewer is severe or tolerant with a writer according to the writer's tone and ambition. White asks for the stars and the average reviewer is going to get annoyed by what could have been a much less pretentious and maybe more readable book. A novelist who plays so cheaply (in my opinion) with life and death cannot win respect on a certain level no matter how serious his intention is to make his Stan and Amy the universal husband and wife, and their story that of the majority of hard-pressed mankind.

It is natural to skip what is not convincing in a novel, and what becomes tedious because an author has refused to cut any of his precious words or impose a form on his material. I wonder, therefore, how many non-literary, ordinary, educated readers will be able to finish a book that makes such a demand on their time without fulfilling the simple obligation of being interesting and convincing, or of living up to its aggressively grand tone. The critic must or should finish the works he writes about, but it would be unrealistic of him to recommend such a performance as this without grave reservations.

REVIEWERS

Joseph M. Duffy, Jr. is a member of the English faculty at the University of Notre Dame.

Nora Magid is a member of the staff of the Reporter.

Seymour Krim, anthologist and critic, reviews frequently for this and other journals.

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The threat came from a redhead in corset and bloomers, with a Colt .45 lashed to her waist. And as the lifeboat marked *S.S. Titanic* lurched into the waves, she rowed too, rowed until her hands bled.

Mrs. Margaret Tobin Brown had come a long way to take charge of that crowded lifeboat. Once penniless, she now had millions. Once semi-illiterate, she now knew five languages. Once spurned by Denver society, she now hobnobbed with nobility.

But, as she said, "You can't wear the social register for water wings." Her $60,000 chinchilla cloak covered three children; her other outer garments she had given to elderly women. She swore, threatened, sang grand opera, joked—and she kept her boatload of wretched survivors going till rescue came.

Asked how she'd done it, she replied, "Typical Brown luck. I'm unsinkable." But it wasn't luck. It was pluck. And Americans have always had plenty of that smiling, hardy courage. When you come to think of it, that's one reason why our country's Savings Bonds rank among the world's finest investments.

For 160 million determined Americans stand behind those Bonds.

The surest way to protect your own security—and the nation's—is through United States Savings Bonds. Invest in them regularly—and hold on to them.

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